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FM AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
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TAGS: OPRC KMDR KPAO PINS PHUM PREF EUN SW

SUBJECT: Media Reaction - Op-ed on Somali terrorist movement Hizbul Islaam by Swedish daily.

II. On March 13, the conservative Stockholm morning daily "Svenska Dagbladet" published a signed op-ed by Per Gudmundson on the Swedish citizen Yassin Ali, founder of Hizbul Islaam, a Somali terrorist organization headlined 'Released from Swedish prison; founded terrorist movement'.

"Swedish citizen Yassin Ali, living in Rinkeby, was detained for 105 days suspected of terrorist crimes. He was not released until June 11 last year, and in September the investigation was closed. The evidence was not sufficient when the prosecutor tried to prove that money had been transferred from Rinkeby to the terrorist movement Shabaab in Somalia....

"Yassin Ali can now be found, together with another Swede, in the leadership of a new armed organization. Hiznul Islaam, the Islamic Party, was founded in January but has in a short time distinguished themselves as one of Somalia's bloodiest....

"The Islamic Party is a coalition of four Islamist organizations of which one is led by Sheikh Hassan Dahir Aweys, who was listed as a terrorist by the United States already in 2001....

"The head of the [Swedish] Security Police's contra-terrorism unit, Mats Paulsson, knows about the movement. 'It is a new coalition which has so far not committed what we regard as traditional terrorist attacks such as suicide bombings. They have on the other hand carried out assaults. Then there is the connection with the aforementioned Aweys. However, with the present legislation it is not possible to, legally speaking, prevent Swedish citizens to participate in this kind of groups,' says Paulsson. As late as last Sunday, the Islamic Party promised to continue the attacks. When Swedish law is insufficient, someone else pays the price."

SILVERMAN